



Press Release

Only original content and directorial conviction will drive Indian cinema's crossover ambition

- *Discussion on Indian cinema by Ashutosh Gowariker and Anupam Kher at 4th DTFF opens up interesting insights*
- *Many Bollywood directors suffer from 'Tarantino Disease,' observes Kher*

Doha, Qatar; November 21, 2012: The global crossover ambitions of Indian cinema can be realised only when directors make film with conviction and based on original content, observed two of the leading personalities of the country's film industry at a discussion with the media at the fourth Doha Tribeca Film Festival (DTFF).

Ashutosh Gowariker, director of Oscar-nominated *Lagaan* and juror of DTFF's Arab Film Competition Feature narrative, and accomplished actor Anupam Kher, who stars in *Silver Linings Playbook*, screening at the festival, offered interesting insights into the current state of filmmaking in India at the discussion, moderated by Rajeev Masand of CNN-IBN.

Gowariker said that given India's diversity, the country's film industry has largely focused on satisfying its own audiences and has not made serious attempts to look outward and go globally, adding that any forced effort to take Indian cinema global will lead to losing the very factors that differentiate the industry.

"However, the process has begun now and there are several concrete steps being taken to make films that appeal to an international audience. But we cannot plan a crossover film. We have to make movies that are based on our conviction and the theme we believe in," said Gowariker.

Kher said that Indian cinema is associated in several Arab countries and in Russia with the legendary director Raj Kapoor. "He did not make films for the international audience, and yet they gained acceptance. Our job is to make films that are true to our sensibilities."

Kher also contended the notion that the Indian film industry must be obsessed about going global. "I personally feel that we do not need to focus on a crossover audience," adding that it is easier for an actor to go global, as several international films look for people to play Indian characters.

Gowariker and Kher said that the relatively longer duration of Indian film is not a liability in its quest to seek global audiences. "It is the kind of film that we make that matters," said Kher.

He said that several modern Indian filmmakers tend to imitate the Hollywood style of filmmaking, which leads to an erosion in the industry's unique identity. "Today, we have what we call the 'Tarantino Disease' among our filmmakers, who adopt his style," added Kher.



On why Arab cinema is not as popular in India, Gowariker said that Indian audiences are very self-sufficient with its own cinema. “The only other cinema that has mass acceptance is Hollywood, given its powerful marketing strategy. Even Omar Sharif (legendary Egyptian actor) had to work in a Hollywood film for us to know him.

“The popularity of Indian cinema in the Arab world is because we entered here when the region’s own film industry was in its infancy, and also because our cinema with its tale of sacrifice, friendship and family ties appeal to Middle East audiences,” said Gowariker.

Kher said that platforms like DTFF will definitely power the growth of Arab cinema and make a difference.

Gowariker and Kher will address a public panel discussion on Bollywood’s cross-over ambitions on Wednesday 4PM at the Katara Opera House as part of Doha Talks, further discussing the industry trends and the role that distribution strategy plays in driving the industry’s crossover attempt.

-ENDS-

[Images from the session are available here](#). Just use the log in details below to access the file marked Nov 20 India Discussion photos in the Nov 20th file

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About Doha Film Institute:

Doha Film Institute (DFI) is an independent cultural organisation established in 2010 to incorporate Qatar’s film initiatives under one banner; organically supporting the growth of the local film community by enhancing industry knowledge, cultivating film appreciation and contributing to the development of sustainable creative industries in Qatar. DFI’s year-round platforms include funding and production of local, regional and international films, educational programmes, film screenings, and the annual Doha Tribeca Film Festival (DTFF). With culture, community, education and entertainment at its foundation, DFI serves as an all-encompassing film hub in Doha, as well as a resource for the region and the rest of the world. DFI is committed to supporting Qatar’s 2030 vision for the development of a knowledge-based economy. DFI has established a number of strategic cultural partnerships with leading local and international organisations including Tribeca Enterprises, World Cinema Foundation, Maisha Film Lab, Katara Cultural Village and Giffoni Film Festival.

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